

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

Telegrams and "Tele-Facebook"

Standard: I. Culture
II. Time, Continuity, and Change
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
IX. Global Connections

Grade Level: 9–12 (Technology/homework/product)

Objectives: The student will:

- Research pre-WWII information on Italy and Ethiopia
- Read and include information from primary source documents in product
- Create a facsimile Facebook page for Mussolini
- Include discussions, photos, and events related to FDR's request in product

Time: 1 class period

Materials: Documents: **1935** *FDR Approaches Mussolini*
1935 *Mussolini Rejects the American Approach*

Resources: *Maps of Ethiopia*

<http://www.imperialethiopia.org/index.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3xLGRhHafA>

Access to computer lab or set of wireless laptops
Sample Facebook pages
Portfolios for student work

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

By the time of Franklin Roosevelt's inauguration in March 1933, dictators were on the rise in Germany and in Italy. American foreign policy would have to change, but FDR was hampered by isolationist policies—and sentiment—in the United States.

In 1935, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini embarked on his dream of recreating the glories of the ancient Roman empire. His target was one of Italy's traditional spheres of influence—the primitive, weak kingdom of Ethiopia. FDR wanted to name Italy as the aggressor to prevent any American arms from reaching Mussolini, but Congress insisted, in the Neutrality Act of 1935, that an embargo must cover both sides. No aid for the embattled Ethiopians would be forthcoming.

In this lesson, students will peer behind the scenes of presidential diplomacy, read a telegram from Washington to the U.S. Ambassador with a message for Mussolini, and then read Mussolini's reaction in another telegram to the Secretary of State. Students will be asked to speculate on how the crisis might have played out on Facebook.

Pre-Lesson

Ask students to review all the parts of a Facebook page. If school policy does not allow them to use Facebook, select a sample profile from an unknown person (or from the school) to show all the parts of a page. Students will be creating a Facebook page for Mussolini and his contacts with FDR.

Day One Procedures

1. Write all the key parts of a Facebook page on the board:

- Wall
- Info
- Photos
- Discussions
- Events
- Links
- Caption for full name

2. Distribute the documents and the maps of Ethiopia.

3. Ask students to read the telegrams and study the maps.

4. With access to the websites listed have students research the story of Ethiopia and its emperor, Haile Selassie.

5. With information from all these sources students will create a Facebook page for Mussolini filling in his wall and basic information. Ask them to include maps and photos wherever they can of the people and events. Based on the levels of pages they create, a grade will be determined.

- a.** One page only: D
- b.** Wall and information pages: C
- c.** Wall, information, and discussion pages: B
- d.** Wall, information, discussion, and events pages: A
- e.** All the above listed plus links and more connections: A+

Encourage them to go for the "A" and to print out all their designed pages. None of these are real face book entries but only facsimiles to be put in a portfolio folder and handed in to the teacher.

6. Collect the portfolios and display them in the classroom for students to share with peers and other teachers. ■